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18 August 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Office of the Legislative Counsel

ATTENTION:

SUBJECT: Letter Written by Julius Epstein, a Research Associate of the Hoover Institute of Stanford University, to the Editor of the Palo Alto Times

1. This is in answer to your request for more information on Mr. James Gehrig's questions.

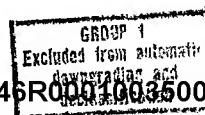
2. Intelligence on hand indicates rather clearly that the subject account of Soviet manned space failures is false. There has been a succession of articles of similar tenor appearing in each case to provide specific details of Soviet catastrophes in space but in no case can these details be corroborated by intelligence on Soviet space activities. That these articles feed upon one another and enjoy immunity from open disproof is revealed in the growing number of deaths reported as they periodically reappear.

3. With one possible exception, all the persons named in the letter appear to be actual persons which have appeared at one time or another in the Soviet press. It appears that Mr. Epstein could have acquired the cited names in the following places:

a. Serenty Shiborin - The name "Terentiy Shiborin" apparently first appeared in the 26 November 1961 (No. 48) issue of a Munich (Germany) weekly called Revue under the title of "Eight Soviet Spacemen Burned to Death". There is no evidence that such a person ever existed.

b. Piotr Dolgow - "Piotr Dolgov" was reported by the USSR as a high altitude parachutist who was killed while making a jump from a very high altitude on 1 November 1962. This jump was described in Izvestia on 15 November 1962. Again, a Soviet publication Kryl'ya Rodiny (No. 2, February 1963) described the jump and Dolgov as a "holder of the Order of Lenin for testing and perfecting the outfitting of the Cosmonauts". Since the Soviet cosmonauts have used an individual parachute recovery system, Dolgov's testing of parachutes was probably related to this type of equipment.

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c. Wassilievitch Zowodowsky - A 28 May 1963 copy of Izvestia reports that "Zavodovskiy", formerly a tester of systems and equipment for high altitude flights is now a Moscow chauffeur. It has been reported [REDACTED] that his name and picture have appeared in the Soviet press in connection with the testing of aircraft instruments.

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d. Alexei Belokonev, Ivan Kascheur, Alexis Gratzev, and Jennady Michailov - These four names appeared in the Soviet periodical Ogonek (No. 42, October 1959). Although the article discussed special suits to be used in space and at high altitudes, the individuals above were called technical workers and not cosmonauts.

2/4. The transliteration used by Mr. Epstein indicates German or Polish sources. The origin of these stories may very well be emigré groups attempting to discredit the Soviet space program.



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